

1 *sub* 23. (New) The method for facilitating hemostasis of a puncture in the wall of
2 a blood vessel according to Claim 15, wherein the step of loading the introducer includes
3 injecting fluid into the introducer to hydrate and compress the pledget.

1 *Sub* 24. (New) The method for facilitating hemostasis of a puncture in the wall of
2 a blood vessel according to Claim 23, wherein the introducer is provided with a distal vent
3 for facilitating loading of the introducer.--

REMARKS

Claims 1-9 and 15-19 are pending as amended. Claims 10-14 have been canceled. Claims 20 - 24 have been added. Entry of the above amendments prior to consideration of the application is respectfully requested. An early action on the merits is requested.

In the event that there are any questions concerning the amendments or the application in general, the Examiner is respectfully urged to telephone the undersigned so that prosecution may be expedited.

Respectfully submitted,
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